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Local DCS office receives duffel bag donation

GREENFIELD (September 3, 2019) – \$500 worth of duffel bags for foster children were donated to the Hancock County office of the Indiana Department of Child Services on Tuesday.

The delivery comes on the heels of the department’s #TrashTalk campaign in May, which sought to raise awareness of the challenges children face when being removed from their homes because of abuse or neglect; namely, sometimes having nothing but a trash bag to carry their belongings in as they enter foster care.

In recognition of May as National Foster Care Month, DCS partnered with Borrowed Hearts, an Evansville-based nonprofit, to raise money to buy duffel bags for foster youth, with each donation benefitting the donor’s county.

Hancock County Sheriff Brad Burkhart contributed \$500 to Borrowed Hearts, which oversaw ordering the duffel bags. Tuesday, Burkhart personally delivered more than 100 duffel bags to the Hancock County office. Burkhart’s was the largest donation made to the statewide campaign.

Burkhart has worked hand in hand with DCS caseworkers over the years on child abuse and neglect cases. Having to remove a child from their home is always difficult, even when it’s a necessary step to keep them safe, he said.

“When you’re trying to quickly get these kids out of an unsafe situation, there isn’t always time to pack a suitcase – and some kids don’t even have one,” he said. “Giving them a duffel bag seems like such a small gesture, but it provides a little dignity to children who are going through something stressful through no fault of their own.”



Indiana children will live in safe, healthy and supportive families and communities.

As of August, there were almost 13,500 children in foster care in Indiana. The #TrashTalk campaign gave the community an easy way to support them, said Amy Waltermire, DCS local office director for Hancock County.

“Not everyone is able to be a foster parent, but we want people to know there are other ways to help children in need,” Waltermire said. “Just \$6 buys a duffel bag, and the impact is unbelievable to children in foster care.”

The campaign is ongoing. For more information, visit IndianaFosterCare.org; click on the Borrowed Hearts logo.

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About Indiana DCS: *The Indiana Department of Child Services engages with families and collaborates with state, local and community partners to protect children from abuse and neglect and to provide child support services. Indiana Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline: 800.800.5556. Child Support Customer Service Kidsline: 800.840.8757 or 317.233.5437. www.in.gov/dcs*



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